

Lotus cc:Mail for Karen Sprecher Keating

Date: 9/13/00 12:09 AM
Sender: "Kekoa Enomoto" <kekoa@mauinews.com>
To: KAREN SPRECHER KEATING
Priority: Normal
Subject: Comment on Draft Report on the Reconciliation Process (ha...

Author: "Kekoa Enomoto" <kekoa@mauinews.com> at DUJ
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Comment on Draft Report on the Reconciliation Process (hard
copy, as it appeared
in 9/12/2000 edition of The Maui News, to follow)

An open letter to Sen. Dan Akaka, John Berry of the U.S.
Department of the
Interior, and Jacqueline Agtuca of the U.S. Office of Tribal
Justice:
Aloha mai kakou,
Mahalo for your vision, grace and resolute patience during the
hearings
concerning the Draft Report on the Reconciliation Process
Between the
Federal Government and Native Hawaiians prepared by the
departments of the
Interior and Justice.
I testified at Paukukalo Hawaiian homestead community center
last December
on a breezy day overlaid with the scent of lei pua kenikeni.
Subsequently,
Interior and Justice took eight months to draft a 76-page
document based on
more than 40 hours of testimony.
Native Hawaiians are asked to comment on the report within one
month. So be
it ? with 11 days to go until the Sept. 23 deadline.
In response to this document titled "From Mauka to Makai: The
River of
Justice Must Flow Freely," I congratulate you on the report's
recommendations for:
1) Native Hawaiian self-determination within the framework of
federal law,
and federal recognition of a Native Hawaiian governing body.
2) Establishment of a federal office to address Native Hawaiian
issues
("with an experienced, permanent-career staff"); transfer of
future surplus
federal lands to the Native Hawaiian people; and bestowal of
traditional
Hawaiian names on geographic features on Interior-managed isle
lands.
3) An ongoing dialogue by Native Hawaiians and the Office of
Tribal Justice.
4) Establishment of a Native Hawaiian Advisory Commission on
management of
land, resources, culture, language and sacred sites.

5) Collaboration by Native Hawaiians, the U.S. executive and legislative branches and the State of Hawaii to develop a process to ensure "true reconciliation" ? including promotion of native Hawaiian welfare and rights, and redress of wrongs.

I agree with recommendation No. 1 that "the executive branch should not prescribe what form any new native Hawaiian governing body should take." I endorse establishment of a culturally appropriate body that would be Hawaiian vs. western, and therefore values-driven vs. goals-oriented.

I envision an entity based on cultural values of respect for kupuna (elders), lokahi (consensus) and haʻahaʻa (humility). Such an array would contrast with western structures, such as the state Office of Hawaiian Affairs with its board of trustees and administrator, or a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with its officers and board of directors.

It could be said that the latter two structures have not translated with ease in the Hawaiian community.

And, under recommendation No. 4, I support a Native Hawaiian Advisory Commission that is selected by the native Hawaiian community vs. "appointed by the secretary of the Interior."

The former format would affirm the draft report's statement that Native Hawaiians "desire to increase their control over their own affairs and institutions."

Thus, I hope that out of the vision, grace and patience grounding this draft report emerges a pono outcome that transcends misdeed and strident acrimony.

As the report's introduction says, "The United States government and Native Hawaiians (must) join hands to repair the past and build a better future, based upon righteousness and justice, and guided by the spirit of healing and aloha to fulfill the goal of reconciliation."

(The report is available at Web site <http://www.doi.gov/nativehawaiians/>.)

Interested persons may comment on the report in one of several ways. E-mail to Karen_Sprecher_Keating@ios.doi.gov (hard copy must follow). Deliver to the OHA office in Kahului or Kaunakakai. Fax to (202) 208-3230. Or send to Assistant Secretary John Berry, c/o Document Management Unit, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Mailstop 7229, Washington, D.C. 20240.)

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Kekoa Catherine Enomoto is a copy editor for The Maui News.